PHARMACARE NEWSLETTER

In this issue

Staffing Changes 1
Last General Mailing 1
Maximum Days' Supply Policy Reminder 1
Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) - Practitioner Special Authority (SA) Exemptions 2
Information on correct product quantities 3
Special services fees 3
Benefits 4
LCA updates 4
Drugs under review 6

This newsletter provides information on the PharmaCare program for British Columbia's community pharmacists. Please circulate among dispensing staff.

PharmaCare on the Web:
www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/pharme

Staffing Changes

Phyllis Chuly is joining PharmaCare as Acting Executive Director. Suzanne Solven continues in the role of Acting Executive Director, Pharmaceutical Services. Wendy Eyres is on Maternity Leave. During Wendy's absence Janet Carter is Acting Director, Policy and Program Analysis.

Last General Mailing

This is the last general mailing of the PharmaCare Newsletter. Effective with the next Newsletter, Newsletters and PharmaNet Bulletins will only be available on the PharmaCare Web site at http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/pharme. An e-mail subscription service is available on the Web site, which provides notification to stakeholders when a new Newsletter or Bulletin is posted. Pharmacies may continue to receive printed copies of both Newsletters and Bulletins for the foreseeable future by completing the enclosed request form.

Maximum Days' Supply Policy Reminder

For short-term drug prescriptions and first-time prescriptions for maintenance drugs, PharmaCare limits coverage to a **maximum 30 days supply**.

Short-term drugs include antibiotics, sedatives, sleeping pills and barbiturates, some of which are addictive or become ineffective if used over a long period of time.

For maintenance drugs used for long-term conditions, such as diabetes and Parkinson's Disease, the first prescription is limited to 30 days to prevent wastage by ensuring that the drug will be effective in treating the condition. Repeat prescriptions of maintenance drugs are covered for a **maximum 100 days supply**.

When a prescription is discontinued for a period of time, and then re-started, pharmacists should use their professional discretion in determining whether the prescription should be considered a first fill. A rough guideline is four months.

Exemptions to the 30-day supply policy are available for:

- Plan B patients (Residents of long-term care facilities). Pharmacies servicing long-term care facilities provide resident medications packaged in a monitored dosage system containing approximately one month's supply.
- Residents of rural or remote areas without a pharmacy nearby.
- Prescriptions under the Trial Prescription Program (where a 14 day trial has been dispensed).

Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) - Practitioner Special Authority (SA) Exemptions

With the introduction of the new coverage criteria for PPIs, changes were made to practitioner SA exemptions for these medications. As of July 15, 2003, exemptions have been maintained for specialist physicians who, by nature of their specialty practice, may experience an administrative burden.

Gastroenterologists and individually identified physicians have SA exemptions for:

- rabeprazole 10 mg (Pariet®) - usual daily dose is 20 mg (2 x 10 mg tablets)
- omeprazole 10 and 20 mg (Losec®)
- pantoprazole 40 mg (Pantoloc®)
- lansoprazole 15 and 30 mg (Prevacid®)

PharmaCare has requested that these physicians conscientiously apply the PharmaCare coverage criteria, employing rabeprazole as the first line treatment for new patients. Prescribing practices will be monitored to assess voluntary compliance.

Physicians performing endoscopies have an SA exemption for:

- rabeprazole 10 mg (Pariet®) - usual daily dose is 20 mg (2 x 10 mg tablets)

Some individual endoscopists have also been granted exemptions for other PPIs on the basis of their patient load and/or geographic location.

PharmaCare will consider PPI SA exemptions for individual physicians if a significant administrative burden is evident and the physician:

- specializes in internal medicine, or
- is a rural physician treating the majority of gastroenterology patients in the region.

Requests may be addressed to Lynda Chiu, Pharmacy Consultant, PharmaCare, PO Box 9655 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria BC V8W 9P2.

Please note that practitioner SA exemptions for esomeprazole (Nexium®) are not available.

Information on correct product quantities

Desmopressin Acetate Nasal Spray 0.1mg/ml

Important: When dispensing the following products, PharmaCare's price is based on a 2.5ml bottle. Therefore, your quantity should be 2.5. The drug cost indicated on PharmaNet is based on the price per ml.

If you have any problems entering a decimal, please contact Michele Porter or Maureen Glenn through the PharmaCare HelpDesk.

DIN 836362 DDAVP, Spray Nas Sol 0.1mg/ml, FEI = Partial, $14.1411

DIN 2242465 Apo-Desmopressin Spr 0.1mg/ml, APX = Full

Thiamine HCL Inj USP 100mg/ml

Important: When dispensing the following products, PharmaCare's price is based on the 10ml vial. The quantity should be 1 for each 1ml. There is also a 1ml ampul. The drug cost indicated on PharmaNet is based on the price per 1ml.

DIN 816078 Thiamine Chlorhydrate Inj 100mg/ml, SIL = Partial, $1.2330

DIN 2243525 Thiamine HCL Inj 100mg/ml, CYI = Full

Special services fees

The number of Special Services fees paid for by PharmaCare over the past months are:

DATE	NO. OF FEES	DATE	NO. OF FEES
Mar 2003	2,901	June 2003	3,183
Apr 2003	3,145	July 2003	3,381
May 2003	2,941		

Benefits

The following new products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits under Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C and F:

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME	Short Term	Long Term	Plan G Eligible	Palliative Care Eligible
2247346	NOP	Novo-Gabapentin Tab 800mg	N	Y	N*	Y
2245432	APX	Apo-Pimozide Tab 2mg	N	Y	Y	N
2245433	APX	Apo-Pimozide Tab 4mg	N	Y	Y	N
2245400	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 40mg/ml	N	Y	N	N
2245406	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 80mg/ml	N	Y	N	N
2245407	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 40mg/ml with preservative	N	Y	N	N
2245408	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 80mg/ml with preservative	N	Y	N	N
2247364	RPH	Ratio-Methylphenidate Tab 5mg	N	Y	Y	Y

* Requires a Special Authority

LCA updates

New Drugs Categorized to LCA and/or RDP

The following new products under the Low Cost Alternative Program (LCA)/Reference Drug program (RDP) are now included as eligible PharmaCare benefits under Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C and F.

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME	FULL/ PARTIAL	LCA/RDP Price	Short Term	Long Term	Plan G Eligible	Eligible for Palliative Care
2245623	APX	Apo-Amoxi Clav Tab 875/125mg	P	$1.4542	Y	N	N	Y
2246627	PMS	Pms-Medroxyprogesterone Tab 2.5mg	P	$0.0827	N	Y	N	N
2246628	PMS	Pms-Medroxyprogesterone Tab 5mg	P	$0.1633	N	Y	N	N
2247322	ODN	Proctol Ointment	P	$0.6040	N	Y	N	Y
2246820	RXP	Rhoxal-Metformin FC Tab 500mg	P	$0.1247	N	Y	N	Y

Limited Coverage Drugs

The following new products are now included as eligible PharmaCare benefits under the Limited Coverage program for Fair PharmaCare and Plans B, C and F, by special authority only. (Please refer to Web site for criteria.)

DIN	MAN	Brand Name	Short Term	Long Term
2247373	NOP	Novo-Alendronate Tab 10mg	N	Y

New LCA Categories

Please be advised that the following drugs will be included as New LCA Categories on PharmaNet, effective **September 22, 2003**:

New Category (Chemical Name)	DIN	MAN	Brand Name	LCA Status: Full/Partial	LCA Price
Alendronate Sodium Tab 10mg	2247373	NOP	Novo-Alendronate Tab 10mg	F	
	2201011	FRS	Fosamax Tab 10mg	P	$1.2751
Gabapentin Tab 800mg	2247346	NOP	Novo-Gabapentin Tab 800mg	F	
	2239718	PFI	Neurontin Tab 800mg	P	$1.8053
Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 40mg/ml	2245400	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 40mg/ml	F	
	30759	PUJ	Depo-Medrol 40mg/ml	P	$4.0271
Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 80mg/ml	2245406	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 80mg/ml	F	
	30767	PUJ	Depo-Medrol 80mg/ml	P	$7.7096
Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 40mg/ml w/preservative	2245407	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 40mg/ml with preservative	F	
	1934333	PUJ	Depo-Medrol (with preservative) 40mg/ml	P	$4.0271
Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 80mg/ml w/preservative	2245408	SIL	Methylprednisolone Acetate Inj Susp 80mg/ml with preservative	F	
	1934341	PUJ	Depo-Medrol (with preservative) 80mg/ml	P	$7.7096
Pimozide Tab 2mg	2245432	APX	Apo-Pimozide Tab 2mg	F	
	313815	PHH	Orap Tab 2mg	P	$0.2578
Pimozide Tab 4mg	2245433	APX	Apo-Pimozide Tab 4mg	F	
	313823	PHH	Orap Tab 4mg	P	$0.4679

Drugs under review

The following drug submissions are currently under review by the Drug Benefit Committee of PharmaCare:

alfuzosin (**XATRAL® 10mg tabs**), **resubmission**	methylphenidate hydrochloride (**CONCERTA® tabs**)
anakinra (**KINERET® 150mg/ml Injection**)	olanzapine (**ZYPREXA® tabs**), **new indication**
ancestim (**STEMGEN® 1875mcg/vial and 2500mcg/vial Injection**)	perindopril erbumine and indapamide (**BIPREL® 4mg/1.25mg tabs**)
botulinum toxin (**BOTOX® Injection**), **new indication**	pimecrolimus (**ELIDEL® 1% cream**)
clopidogrel (**PLAVIX® 75mg tabs**), **new indication**	pioglitazone (**Actos® 15mg, 30mg and 45mg tabs**), **resubmission**
desmopressin (**DDAVP® tabs**), **resubmission**	risperidone (**RISPERDAL M-TAB® 0.5mg, 1mg and 2mg orally disintegrating tabs**)
desmopressin acetate (**OCTOSTIM® 15mcg/ml injection**)	rivastigmine (**EXELON® caps**), **resubmission**
donepezil (**ARICEPT® 5mg and 10mg tabs**), **resubmission new data**	rofecoxib (**VIOXX® 25mg tabs**), **new indication**
estradiol-17b (**VAGIFEM® 25mcg vaginal tabs**)	rosuvastatin calcium (**CRESTOR® 10mg, 20mg,40mg tabs**)
etanercept (**ENBREL® injection**), **new indication**	rosiglitazone/metformin (**AVANDAMET®**)
ezetimibe (**EZETROL® 10mg tabs**)	rosiglitazone (**AVANDIA® tabs**), **resubmission**
filgrastim (**NEUPOGEN® 0.3mg/ml**), **new indication**	tacrolimus (**PROTOPIC® 0.03% and 0.1% ointment**), **resubmission**
galantamine (**REMINYL® 4mg, 8mg and 12mg tabs**), **resubmission**	telithromycin (**KETEK® 400mg tabs**)
ganciclovir (**CYTOVENE® 500mg caps**)	testosterone (**ANDRODERM® 24.3mg transdermal delivery system**)
glimepiride (**AMARYL® 1mg, 2mg and 4mg tabs**)	tiotropium bromide (**SPIRIVA® 18 mcg caps**)
irbesartan (**AVAPRO® tabs**), **new indication**	trandolapril/verapamil hydrochloride SR (**TARKA® 1/240mg, 2/180mg, 2/240mg, 4/240mg tabs**)
latanoprost/timolol maleate (**XALACOM® 50 mcg/ml ophthalmic solution**)	valdecoxib (**BEXTRA® 10mg & 20mg tabs**)
levetiracetam (**KEPPRA® 250mg, 500mg and 750mg tabs**)	vitamin and mineral supplement (**DIAPLEX®**)
losartan (**COZAAR® tabs**), **new indication**	zoledronic acid (**ZOMETA® 4mg vial**)